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Senator Jelinek Applauds Administration's Decision to Recommend Reinstatement of Project Funding for US 31

Announcement Comes After Extensive Discussion and Public Input

(LANSING) – Following months of deliberation, public input and negotiations, Sen. Ron Jelinek, R-Three Oaks, today hailed the agreement between the Republican-controlled Legislature and the Granholm administration which will recommend the restoration of previously deferred funding for Berrien County's US-31, Napier Avenue to I-94 **project**.

"To stop this access to the freeway in its final stages would be disastrous," Jelinek said. "This is the best news this decade for Southwest Michigan. This project is important **not only** to Berrien County, **but** to the rest of the state **as well**, as we move forward creating healthy cities that benefit employers, employees, and ensures traffic safety."

Earlier this year, Gov. Granholm **vetoed funding for** 34 road improvement projects across the state, including the US 31 project.

The administration's willingness to include the project came following intense budget negotiations between the Governor and Legislative leadership, **with Senator Jelinek holding firm on the inclusion of this project**.

The US-31, Napier Avenue to I-94 project is the final leg of a new limited access freeway. The project is in the final stages of the environmental clearance process. The new freeway leading to Napier Avenue is currently under construction and will be open to traffic **on Monday, August 18, 2003**. Napier Avenue is the temporary connection between US-31 and I-94 which has been widened to meet the current and future traffic needs.